

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 01447 171619Z

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2687

INFO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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PASS COM/OED/MEPD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PEXP, BENC, GR

SUBJECT: COUNTRY FINANCED SERVICES: THESSALONIKI PORT DEVELOPMENT

REF: (A) ATHENS 1190 (B) STATE 27166 (C) ATHENS 850

1. AID ENGINEER GROCEMAN AND THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR HELD AN EXTENDED DISCUSSION FEBRUARY 12 WITH THESSALONIKI PORT PRESIDENT VALALAS ON THESSALONIKI PORT DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPECTS FOR EXIM BANK FINANCING.

2. VALALAS CLARIFIED THAT AT LEAST THREE SEPARATE PROJECTS ARE INVOLVED. FIRST IS EXPANSION OF EXISTING PORT FACILITIES, INCLUDING COMPLETION OF PIER 6. SUCH EXPANSION, COMBINED WITH INCREASED WORKSHIFTS IN THE PORT AREA, WOULD TRIPLE PRESENT CAPACITY AND MEET ESTIMATED DEMAND FOR UP TO TEN YEARS. FEASIBILITY STUDIES FOR THIS PROJECT ARE NOT NECESSARY AND US OPPORTUNITIES EXIST ONLY FOR EQUIPMENT SUPPLY, INCLUDING CONTAINERIZATION FACILITIES, AND A SPECIALIZED CONSULTANT CONTRACT FOR PORT MANAGEMENT SERVICES. THESSALONIKI OFFICIALS WILL DISCUSS BOTH WITH FEBRUARY 28- MARCH 3 PORT AND SHIPYARD MISSION.

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 01447 171619Z

3. SECOND, VALALAS CLAIMS TO HAVE APPROVAL FROM

COORDINATION MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS FOR MASTER STUDY FOR FUTURE PORT EXPANSION. STUDY WOULD EXAMINE SPECTRUM OF ALTERNATIVES, INCLUDING WESTWARD EXPANSION OF EXISTING PORT, DEVELOPMENT OF AXION BASIN, OR CONSTRUCTION OF CENTRAL PORT "ISLAND". VALALAS ESTIMATES COST OF SUCH SURVEY IN AREA OF \$300,00 BASED ON MEETINGS IN US DURING SUMMER 1975.

4. THIRD, VALALAS FORESEES NEED FOR IN DEPTH STUDY OF AXIOS BASIN AND INDUSTRIAL ZONE REQUIRING TWO YEARS END OVER ONE MILLION DOLLARS. LATTER IS OUTSIDE AUTHORITY OF HIS ORGANIZATION, HOWEVER, AND WOULD BE UNDER MINISTRY OF COORDINATION WITH INPUTS FROM OTHER MINISTRIES, INCLUDING MERCHANT MARINE AND PUBLIC WORKS. HE EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT SPECIFIC PLANS OR COSTS HAVE NOT BEEN FORMULATED TO HIS KNOWLEDGE AND INDICATED THAT PROJECT MIGHT EVEN BE JOINT UNDERTAKING WITH YUGOSLAVIA.

5. ECON/COMM COUNSELOR REPEATED POINT MADE EARLIER LAST WEEK WITH ETVA DEPUTY GOVERNOR KOPANITSAS THAT EXIMBANK FINANCING MIGHT BE AVAILABLE FOR VARIOUS PHASES OF THESE PROJECTS. BOTH KOPANITSAS AND VALALAS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THIS FACT AND INDICATED THAT IT WOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION AS THE PROJECT PLANS DEVELOP FURTHER.

6. AID ENGINEER GROCEMAN IS INFORMED ON THESE VARIOUS PROJECTS AND WILL CONTACT PAKIS ON RETURN, FEBRUARY 17.
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